

Message Text

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S E C R E T QUITO 1387

LIMDIS

GUAYAQUIL FOR CONSUL GENERAL AND JOHN KING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS MILI PFOR EC

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT POVEDA RE ECUADOREAN

NAVY AND VISIT OF LT. GEN. MCAULIFFE, CINCSOUTH

1. DURING THE COURSE OF A CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT, VICE ADMIRAL ALFREDO POVEDA BURBANO, THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 18, WE DISCUSSED BOTH THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ECUADOREAN NAVY AND THE IMPENDING VISIT OF LT. GENERAL MCAULIFFE, CINCSO.

2. AS I COULD TESTIFY, THE ADMIRAL SAID, " SINCE THE DAY I TOOK OVER THE COMMAND OF THE NAVY I HAVE CONSISTENTLY TRIED TO REORIENT IT TOWARD ITS TRADITIONAL LINKS WITH THE UNITED STATES." THE ADMIRAL SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE NAVY. THERE HAD BEEN CONFUSION IN ITS ORIENTATION FOR YEARS SINCE OUR ASSISTANCE HAD ENDED. THE NAVY NOW REALIZED THAT THE LACK OF A DEFINITE POLICY HAD WORKED TO ITS DISADVANTAGE, AND THERE WAS THUS NOW SUPPORT WITHIN IT FOR WORKING WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE ADMIRAL SAID IN THIS CONNECTION THAT SEVERAL REQUESTS FOR STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES HAD RECENTLY BEEN TURNED

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DOWN. HE SAID THAT THIS HAD HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE

"GENERAL MOOD" IN THE NAVY. HE ASKED THAT THESE REFUSALS BE RECONSIDERED, STATING THAT HE WANTED THE COURSES TO GO FORWARD EVEN IF THE GOE HAD TO PAY FOR THEM: THEIR CONTINUANCE AND THE CONTINUANCE OF POSITIVE SIGNS OF COOPERATION FROM OUR SIDE WERE ESSENTIAL TO THE REORIENTATION OF THE NAVY TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. I PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

3. I MENTIONED BRIEFLY THE FEBRUARY 25-27 VISIT OF LT. GENERAL MCAULIFFE, CINCSOUTH, REMARKING THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST IMPORTANT MILITARY VISIT IN SOME YEARS, AND THAT I WAS PLEASED THE GOE HAD ACCEPTED IT. HOWEVER, IN WORKING OUT SOME OF THE DETAILS, THERE HAD BEEN A FEW COMPLAINTS FROM ECUADOREAN OFFICERS THAT THE VISIT WAS TOO SHORT AND THAT GENERAL MCAULIFFE WOULD NOT HAVE TIME TO VISIT CERTAIN UNITS WHICH THEY WISHED HIM TO SEE. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT I WANTED HIM TO KNOW THAT THE RELATIVE SHORTNESS OF THE VISIT HAD BEEN MY DECISION. WE HAD TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY ON SEVERAL PAST OCCASIONS TO ARRANGE VISITS TO ECUADOR OF GENERAL MCAULIFFE'S PREDECESSOR, AND I HENCE HAD DECIDED THAT THIS FIRST VISIT OF GENERAL MCAULIFFE SHOULD BE LIMITED TO AN EXPLORATORY VISIT DURING WHICH HE MIGHT MEET AND CONVERSE WITH THE COUNTRY'S MILITARY LEADERS. ADMIRAL POVEDA SAID HE AGREED COMPLETELY WITH THIS APPROACH, AND THAT AFTER ALL WE COULD NOT EXPECT EVERYTHING TO BE RESUMED AT ONCE AND EVERYTHING TO OPEN UP COMPLETELY AT ONCE.

BREWSTER

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